


Oxford Core Strategy Examination Statement of Oxford City Council		www.oxford.gov.uk  OXFORD CITY COUNCIL
C/M3/3	Matter 3 – Retailing and the Hierarchy of Centre Issue 3 – Retail provision	

i) What is the overall strategy for retailing?

Policy CS32 defines Oxford's retail hierarchy. This identifies a network of centres where future retail growth, of an appropriate scale, will be directed. It comprises the City centre, Primary District centre then Secondary District centres, followed by edge-of-centre sites and finally Neighbourhood centres.

ii) What underlies the distribution of new retailing shown in the table prior to policy CS32?

This table identifies the centres within the retail hierarchy, which have the capacity to accommodate need, as expressed in terms of additional retail floorspace to 2016. The figures referred to in the table are taken from the Retail Needs Study Update (March 2008) (CD14/8).

The City centre through the redevelopment of the Westgate shopping centre and St.Aldates / Queen St will support in the region of 37,000 sqm of floorspace.

The Primary District centre at Cowley centre (Templars Square shopping centre and John Allen Retail Park) is estimated to be able to accommodate 10,500 sqm of additional comparison (non-food) floorspace through redevelopments of potential development sites on Templars Square and redevelopments and additional mezzanines at John Allen Retail Park. Convenience (food) provision could accommodate some 2,300 sqm, through either Crowell Road or another Multi-storey car park.

Of the other District centres Summertown has the greatest capacity to support further floorspace. It is estimated that this could include both additional comparison (non-food) and convenience (food) provision.

Finally Blackbird Leys centre, currently a neighbourhood centre is proposed to be a mixed-use District centre with capacity to accommodate some additional comparison (non-food) floorspace. This designation will act as a catalyst and a focal point for regeneration.

iii) How, in practice, is that new retailing to be achieved?

Planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the Westgate shopping centre, and a planning application has been submitted for the redevelopment of the St. Aldates / Queen Street site. These sites lie within the defined 'primary shopping area' and are allocated sites as part of the adopted West End Area Action Plan (CD7/5).

The development of the Primary District centre at Cowley is considered in spatial terms to be well located to the southeast of the city. It will offer the opportunity to provide additional services and facilities in the longer term to serve the new residents of the SDA 'urban extension'.

Discussions have taken place with both Threadneedle and Resolution who have already indicated their desire to support additional growth for the Primary District centre. These sites are all within the Primary District centre, but will be allocated through the Site Allocations DPD commencing in September 2009. The boundary of the District centre is also proposed to be extended along Between Towns Road, to offer further potential development opportunities.

The designation of Blackbird Leys as a District centre will offer the opportunity to direct retail to this centre; although it is recognised that retail will be only one element of the future development of this centre. This will be taken forward through the SPD.

The City Council undertake regular Asset Managements reviews their portfolio of land holdings and take a very pro-active approach to exploring and bringing forward the development potential of their sites. Amongst those being pursued at the moment include land at Summetown.

iv) What is the Core Strategy's policy towards out of centre retailing?

The Core Strategy policies accord with the approach taken in the adopted Local Plan 2016. At the Local Plan Inquiry (CD 7/7) the Inspector considered retail development in out-of-centre locations, and took the view, set out in para 2.7.16 that "it is unlikely that there would be a role for such developments in the context of Oxford." The Inspector goes on "the main reasons for reaching this conclusion are the emphasis on centres in Government retail advice; the allocation of sites in centres in the Local Plan; the existing level of out-of-centre retail provision; the need to safeguard the vitality and viability of centres; and traffic generation and highway factors." In relation to the allocation of sites the Inspector recognised that "notwithstanding the compact nature of the city and various conservation interests, it has been possible to identify sites in the City centre and in other centres that would accommodate a range of developments." In these circumstances the

Inspector concluded, "the need for new out-of-centre sites is considered to be unlikely" (para 2.7.18).

Finally the Inspector felt that there were special circumstances in Oxford, which limited the potential development opportunities. The Inspector acknowledged that "Oxford is a compact historic city. Its potential expansion is constrained by a number of factors. At the same time the economy is dynamic. Demand for many types of development exceeds the supply of land. In such circumstances it is desirable to prioritise competing land uses." In this context the Inspector concluded that all retail proposals even those in a town or district centre would have to have to demonstrate need. This approach was taken in recognition of the constraints in Oxford, in order to safeguard land for strategic developments and ensure that large developments that do proceed are needed in the public interest.

Oxford has historically developed a range of out-of-centre retail parks, which are spatially distributed throughout the city (Appendix 1). These have not been identified as centres through either regional spatial strategies or through the Core Strategy. In accordance with Government advice in para 2.54 of PPS6 (CD11/5) therefore the City Council as planning authority do "not regard existing out-of-centre development, comprising or including main town centre uses, such as shops, shopping centres, leisure parks or retail warehouses, as centres." Since to do so would be contrary to the broad thrust of PPS6 (CD11/5) advice which encourages Local Planning Authorities to promote and enhance existing centres by focusing new development in existing centres.

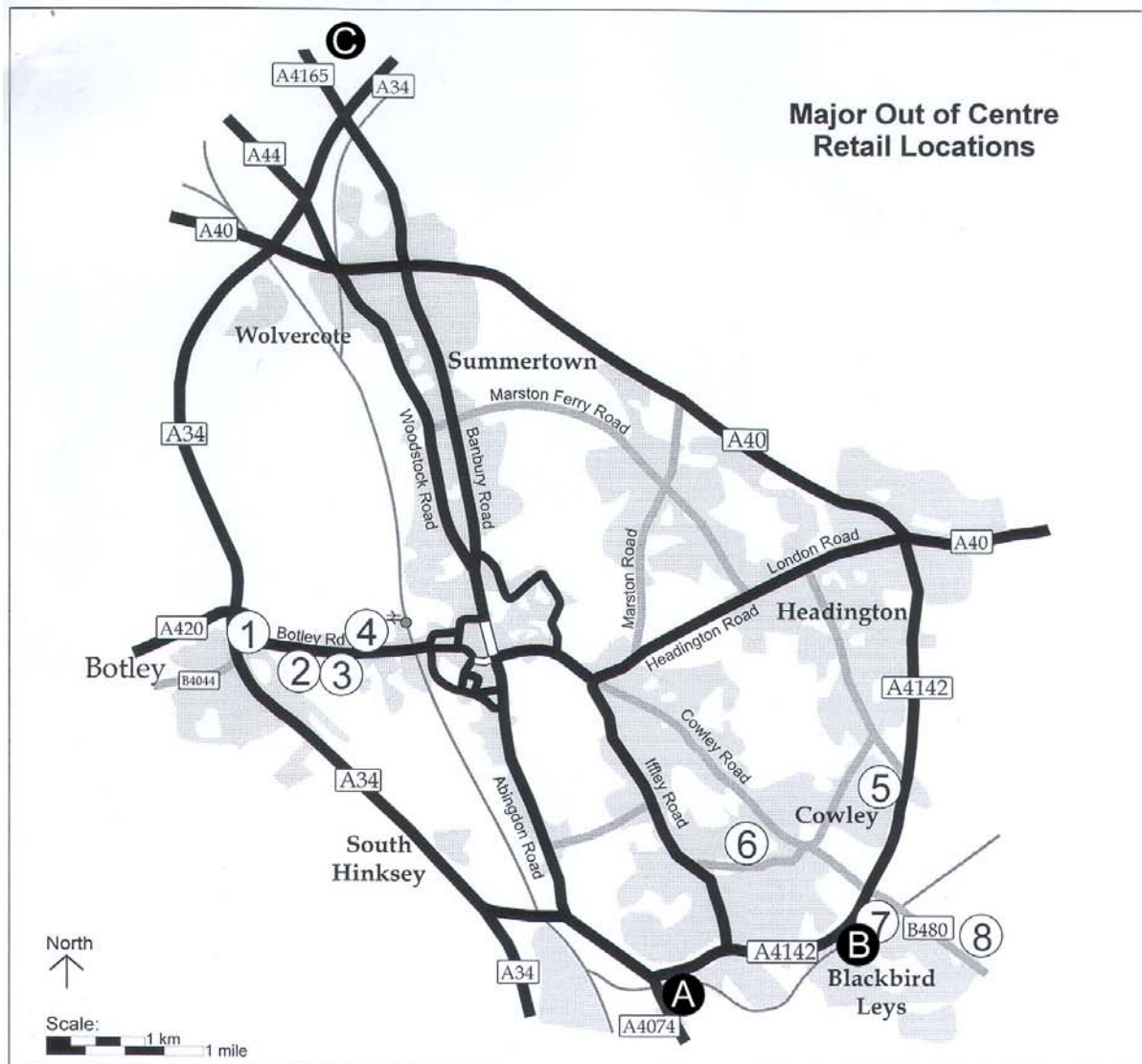
One of the key strategic objectives of the spatial strategy is to reduce the need to travel. This is to be achieved by seeking to direct new developments to accessible locations so as to minimise overall travel demand. The City and District centres have the greatest number of shops and services and the best non-car accessibility. The key to reducing the need to travel within Oxford is therefore to apply a sequential approach to the location of new developments that attract a large number of people, including retail. Policy CS1 sets out the hierarchy of centres.

The core strategy therefore seeks to positively direct new major retail development to the retail hierarchy of centres set out in Policy CS32. The City Council's view is that any spare capacity that might otherwise have been accommodated in out of centre location should preferably be directed towards identified centres and edge-of-centre locations.

Policy CS32 clearly also states that "new retail development must demonstrate need (if outside the city or District centres), compliance with the sequential test, good accessibility and no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of other centres."

Future proposed developments in out-centre locations will therefore be required to fully satisfy both Policies CS1 and CS32 together with any other relevant policies in the Core Strategy. In addition proposals would also need to meet the Government advice set out in PPS.6 and emerging guidance in PPS.4.

Appendix 1 – Major out of centre retail locations



Food Retail

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|----------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| A | Heyford Hill | (Sainsbury) |
| B | Oxford Retail Park | (Tesco) |
| C | Kidlington, north of Oxford | (Sainsbury) |

Non Food Retail

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|--|
| 1 | Seacourt Tower | (Homebase, Habitat, Allied Carpets) |
| 2 | Botley Road | (Wickes, Toys R Us, Argos, Dreams, Aldi) |
| 3 | Lamarsh Road | (Currys, Harveys, Land of Leather, Multiyork, Maplin, Comet, PC World) |
| 4 | Botley Road | (Halfords) |
| 5 | Horspath Driftway | (Homebase, Curreys, Carpetright) |
| 6 | John Allen Centre | (B&Q, Halfords, Comet, Matalan, TK Maxx, Brantano) |
| 7 | Oxford Retail Park | (Mothercare World, Next, Marks and Spencer, Boots, Sports Direct) |